

SECONDHAND SMOKE

Smoking and Secondhand Smoke

- Tobacco contains 4,700 chemicals including: radon, benzene, asbestos, arsenic, formaldehyde, cadmium, hydrogen cyanide, and radioactive elements.
- Tobacco smoking has long been recognized as a major cause of death and disease, responsible for an estimated 434,000 deaths per year in the United States. Over 2,770 Nebraskans died in 1998 from diseases related directly to cigarette smoking.
- Secondhand smoke is a mixture of the smoke given off by the burning end of a cigarette, pipe, or cigar, and the smoke exhaled from the lungs of smokers.
- There is no safe exposure level for secondhand smoke. This mixture contains toxic chemicals, more than 40 of which are known to cause cancer in humans or animals and many of which are strong irritants.
- Secondhand smoke is also called environmental tobacco smoke (ETS); exposure to secondhand smoke is called involuntary smoking, or passive smoking.

Secondhand smoke can cause lung cancer in nonsmokers.

- Secondhand smoke has been classified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a known cause of lung cancer in humans (Group A carcinogen).
- Exposure to secondhand smoke could increase the risk of gum disease to nonsmokers. Among adults in the United States who had never smoked cigarettes, 11 percent of the those exposed to environment tobacco smoke in their homes or at work had periodontal disease. (University of North Carolina School of Dentistry – Feb 2001)
- Women who live with smokers are five times more likely to get lung cancer than women who live with nonsmokers because they inhale cancer-causing compounds from the atmosphere through their lungs (March 2001 Journal of the National Cancer Institute)
- Passive smoking is estimated by EPA to cause approximately 3,000 lung cancer deaths in nonsmoking adults.
- 53,000 nonsmokers die each year from many different diseases such as lung cancer, heart disease, and other cancers caused by secondhand smoke in the U.S.

Secondhand smoke is a serious health risk to children.

- The developing lungs of young children are also affected by exposure to secondhand smoke. Children, particularly infants and toddlers are particularly susceptible to the effects of passive smoking.
- Infants and young children whose parents smoke are among the most seriously affected by exposure to secondhand smoke, being at increased risk of lower respiratory tract infections such as pneumonia and bronchitis. EPA estimates that passive smoking is responsible for between 150,000 and 300,000 lower

respiratory tract infections in infants and children under 18 months of age annually, resulting in between 7,500 and 15,000 hospitalizations each year for problems such as cough, excess phlegm, and wheeze.

- Asthmatic children are especially at risk. Between 200,000 and 1 million children have aggravated asthma symptoms and an estimated 1,900 – 2,700 deaths per year from sudden death syndrome (SIDS) are related to secondhand smoke. Passive smoking may also cause thousands of non-asthmatic children to develop the condition each year.
- Passive smoking can lead to buildup of fluid in the middle ear, the most common cause of hospitalization of children for an operation.

Other health implications.

- Exposure to secondhand smoke causes irritation of the eye, nose, and throat.
- Passive smoking can also irritate the lungs, leading to coughing, excess phlegm, chest discomfort, and reduced lung function.
- Secondhand smoke may affect the cardiovascular system, and some studies have linked exposure to secondhand smoke with the onset of chest pain.

In Restaurants and Bars:

- If smoking is permitted, placement of smoking areas should be determined with some knowledge of the ventilation characteristics of the space to minimize nonsmoker exposure. For example, nonsmoking areas should be near air supply ducts while smoking areas should be near return registers or exhausts. Nonsmokers should be seated in nonsmoking areas as far from smokers as possible.
- Simply separating smokers and nonsmokers within the same area, such as a cafeteria, may reduce exposure, but nonsmokers will still be exposed to re-circulated smoke or smoke drifting into nonsmoking areas. Secondhand smoke knows no boundaries and is present throughout the whole restaurant.
- Ventilated or segregated smoking areas will not provide adequate protection from all the chemicals in tobacco smoke. It can take up to two weeks for nicotine to clear from the air where smoking has occurred.
- Secondhand smoke can ruin a nice evening dinner due to the odor of tobacco smoke and, in extreme cases, cause restaurant patrons to experience watery eyes, stuffy sinuses, and difficulty in breathing.
- Bar and restaurant employees are twice as likely to develop lung cancer than the general working public.
- Researchers at Cornell University found that a smoke-free policy for restaurants attracts more business and revenue than it drives away.

- Employers who have banned smoking report dramatic decreases in the maintenance costs. Furniture and drapes last longer and have to be cleaned less often.
- Reservations and seating are simplified and the wait period is often shorter when restaurants are smoke free.
- The air is cleaner and you can smell the food better when restaurants are smoke free.

(Source: EPA and 2000 Nebraska Guide to Smoke Free Dining)

Protect Yourself, Your Employees, and Your Customers from Secondhand Smoke!

What can you do to protect yourself, your employees, and your customers from secondhand smoke?

- There are over 775 smoke-free restaurants in Nebraska. You can join this growing number of smoke-free restaurants and be on the list in the "2000 Nebraska Guide to Smoke Free Dining" - a guide for customers to choose a smoke-free restaurant. Contact Tobacco Free Nebraska Program at 402-471-2101 to get this free booklet.
- A list of these restaurants can also be found on the Internet at <http://www.healtheducation.org>.
- You can join or support the local Tobacco Prevention Coalition. Call the Lincoln Council on Alcoholism and Drugs (LCAD) 475-2694 for more information.

The Tobacco Free Nebraska Program wants to keep the smoke-free restaurant guide updated. If a restaurant meets the smoke-free restaurant guidelines and is not listed, a customer can call the program at 402-471-2101, use the form at the end of the "2000 Nebraska Guide to Smoke Free Dining" or Email to GASPNEBR@AOL.COM. Also, if a restaurant does not meet the guidelines and is listed, a customer can notify the program.

Smoke-Free Restaurant Guidelines

In order to be on the smoke-free list, your restaurant must meet the following guidelines:

1. The inside area of the eating establishment must be 100% smoke-free at all times. Restaurants which allow smoking outside can be listed, as long as the inside is 100% smoke-free.
2. Restaurants may not have an adjoining bar where smoking is permitted, unless the bar is separate, fully enclosed, and on a separate ventilation system.

(Source: EPA & 2000 Nebraska Guide to Smoke Free Dining)